less we hover above it like a bird in the open air. Here for once the so-called bird's-eye view is not an artistic caprice, but the sole possibility.

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RASH COMPARISONS.—If rash comparisons are not proofs of the wantonness of the writer, they are proofs of the exhaustion of his imagination. In any case they bear witness to his bad taste.

140.

DANCING IN CHAINS.—In the case of every Greek artist, poet, or writer we must ask : What is the new constraint which he imposes upon himself and makes attractive to his contemporaries, so as to find imitators ? For the thing called " invention " (in metre, for example) is always a self-imposed fetter of this kind. " Dancing in chains "—to make that hard for themselves and then to spread a false notion that it is easy—that is the trick that they wish to show us. Even in Homer w[r]e may perceive a wealth of inherited formulae and laws of epic narration, within the circle of which he had to dance, and he himself created new conventions for them that came after. This was the discipline of the Greek poets: first to impose upon themselves a manifold constraint by means of the earlier poets; then to invent in addition a new constraint, to impose it upon themselves and cheerfully to overcome it, so that constraint and victory are perceived and admired.